

## 9th Grade - Your Freshman Year

- Get to know your school's career counselor or see if there's a college and career center available in your school. ASPIRE is the State of Oregon's mentoring program that helps students access education and training beyond high school. Ask if ASPIRE is available at your high school. Use ASPIRE online resources all through high school.
- Take challenging classes in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, a foreign language, government, civics, economics, and the arts. If you are planning on going to college, most colleges require a C- or better in these classes: 4 English, 3 Math, 3 Science, 3 Social Studies, and 2 Foreign Language.
- Get off to a good start; get good grades. The grades you earn in ninth grade will be included in your final high school GPA and class rank. Graduation, college, and career might seem a long way off now, but grades really do count towards reaching career goals, college admissions, and scholarships.
- Get involved in your classes: ask questions, speak up, discuss, and study!
- Let everyone know your plans for after high school: your parents, your teachers, and your school counselor. The sooner they all know you want to go to college or what career you are interested in, the more they can help you reach that goal.
- Think about your talents and special interests: music, science, politics, etc. Join a related club or activity. Have fun and develop your talents. Student government is good way to learn leadership skills, which look good on applications for colleges, jobs, and scholarships.
- Volunteer! Pick a community service project and stick with it.
- Keep track of anything you do during high school, both in school and outside activities:
  - Start a student portfolio, resume, or activities chart
  - Keep a file of awards, honors, or recommendation letters you receive
  - Record clubs, activities, community service, and paid work
  - Keep track of dates, hours, and descriptions of your activities (including leadership duties and other responsibilities)

- Explore career possibilities. Use your school's available resources: [Career Information Systems \(CIS\)](#), [Naviance](#), [College Navigator](#), or [CollegeBoard's Big Future](#). Talk to teachers, family, or other adults in a variety of professions to determine what they like and dislike about their jobs and what kind of education is needed for each kind of job.
- Look into summer enrichment programs. Keep your brain active during the summer and have fun learning something new. Find a paid summer job if you can.

## Career Bound

- Attend virtual career fairs.
- Interested in a trade? Begin researching community colleges, career-technical schools, and apprenticeship programs to learn about their fields of training.

## College Bound

- Sign up for SAT Practice Question of the Day and ACT Question of the Day.
- Consider taking an SAT or ACT prep course.
- Attend virtual college and career fairs.
- Visit college campuses (virtually or in person) on open house days or a scheduled tour
- Begin researching colleges, universities, career-technical schools and their majors or fields of training. Learn about school admission requirements to get an idea of what classes to take in high school.
- Explore [OregonStudentAid.gov](http://OregonStudentAid.gov) to learn about Oregon's grants and scholarships.
- The [Oregon College Savings Plan](#) is a 529 savings account that has special tax advantages to help people save for educational expenses like tuition, computers, supplies and more. Keep saving for college each year.